

Greetings Tom,

Welcome to Alternatives newsletter, a monthly publication designed to empower readers with knowledge and resources to achieve physical, emotional, mental and spiritual healing.

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Bioidentical Hormones: Managing change

Fluctuating hormones are a natural part of aging. But the physical, mental and emotional upheavals that come with "the change" in life often wreak havoc that interferes with daily living for thousands of women. What's worse, these symptoms - there are up to 35 - can last for years. Hot flashes, mood swings, irregular and painful periods, yeast and urinary tract infections, afflict many women during this time of life.

Menopause is defined as the stage in life when a woman has not had her menstrual cycle for one year. But many of the most troublesome symptoms of this change actually occur in peri-menopause, a transitional stage of two to ten years before menopause when hormones are fluctuating wildly.

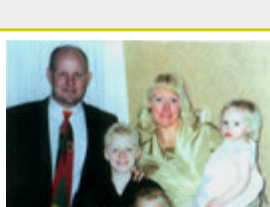
"Research has shown that only about 20 percent of women survive menopause with no symptoms," said Dr. Patricia Ryan. "The rest experience problems that range from mild to severe. Some women manage these changes with diet and exercise. There are also various herbs, such as chasteberry and black cohosh, which can help," she added.

"But as hormones wane, many women will feel better only by re-balancing their hormonal systems. And the best way to do that is through bio-identical hormones," Ryan said. "Bio-identical hormones have the same molecular structure as the hormones made by a woman's body. Interest in bio-identical hormones surged when research conducted through the Women's Health Initiative showed that synthetic hormones may carry health drawbacks, including cancer risks," Dr. Ryan said.

To prescribe bio-identical hormones, levels in a woman are tested and then precise dosages of bio-identical estrogen, progesterone, testosterone and/or DHEA are written to meet that woman's individual needs. For more information about bio-identical hormones, contact Dr. Patricia Ryan.

Omaha woman: Back in balance

Sonya Crane, an Omaha mother of three with a background in human development, had always been healthy. Suddenly, at age 39, she was plagued with a number of disturbing symptoms such as severe memory loss and muscle weakness, fatigue, anxiety and insomnia. "I'd forget to pick up my daughter," she said. A former track athlete, Sonya had trouble walking up a flight of stairs.



The Crane family

"When it came to cooking, all I had energy to do was boil water," she added. A doctor referred her to a neurologist to rule out Multiple Sclerosis. And Sonya thought she might have cancer because she was so weak.

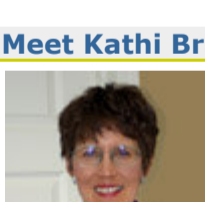
Several rounds of blood tests didn't identify the problem. However, one test showed that the estrogen in her system was abnormally low for her age. Knowing the importance of hormones, Sonya tried to convince her doctors to conduct more tests, but they wouldn't agree. After all, she was only 39, younger than the normal onset of menopause.

So Sonya arranged for the tests herself. "I spent \$650 on a hormone test through a pharmacy," she said, "and found out my testosterone, progesterone and estrogen levels were all too low."

Doctors offered mood stabilizers and sleeping pills. Sonya opted for hormones, but not the synthetic variety many doctors prescribe. Instead, she requested bio-identical hormones as a solution to balance her system, because she felt they would more closely mimic her body's own hormonal make-up.

"By the third day on bio-identical hormones, I was back to my old self again. I was cooking and baking, and my house was clean. All my symptoms went away and I feel much happier, more patient and loving towards my children and husband - not to mention having the energy to care for my family, which has always been the highlight of my life! I'm speaking out because I'm a woman's and family advocate and if a woman loses her health, she's unable to care for her family and be loving to her husband. That's why women should find doctors who are willing to prescribe optimal levels of bio-identical hormones."

Sonya said that Dr. Ryan will continue to monitor her hormone levels to help her achieve optimal balance. For more information about bio-identical hormones, contact Dr. Patricia Ryan, a professional preventative medicine doctor.

Meet Kathi Bratberg, RN

Kathi Bratberg's interest in holistic health and alternative medicine developed from her 30-year nursing career in conventional medicine. "I saw people eating whatever they wanted, using more medications and getting sicker."

"They also were receiving conflicting or no information about how to care for themselves. At Alternatives, we help people understand how their bodies work and the toxic effects that can result from the environment and many foods. Then we give them the tools they need to regain their health. It's just a simple way of restoring health and allowing our bodies to do what they're supposed to do."

Kathi received her nurse's education at Clarkson College of Nursing and the University of Nebraska at Omaha, earning an RN in 1972. She's currently working toward a bachelor's degree in holistic nutrition from Clayton College of Natural Health in Birmingham, Ala.

During her career, she worked in the hospital setting as well as physician's offices. "I am excited to be a part of Alternatives and welcome the opportunity to assist you in your journey to wellness," Kathi said.

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**Featured Product:
DIM
(Diindolylmethane)**

During the month of April this product is on sale at Alternatives.

*DIM (Diindolylmethane) has been shown to help regulate and promote a more efficient metabolism of estrogen, and an optimal ratio of estrogen metabolites. DIM® Enhanced Delivery System from Allergy Research Group contains BioResponse DIM®, a unique formulation containing pure diindolylmethane, an indole. Indoles are plant compounds with health promoting properties, and are found in cruciferous vegetables such as broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower and Brussels sprouts.

DIM® Enhanced Delivery System is a stable, bioavailable form of DIM, made possible through a proprietary delivery system. The formula is co-solubilized with phosphatidylcholine, and microencapsulated in starch particles.

"Women who are taking hormone replacement therapy can be evaluated for DIM through our 24-hour urine test for hormone metabolites," said Dr. Patricia Ryan. "The test looks at how patients metabolize estrogen, and one risk for breast cancer can be identified," she added. "Men also benefit from DIM if they take testosterone therapy, because it helps them metabolize their testosterone safely," she said.

*These statements have not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration. This product is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure, or prevent any disease.

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